

## Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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O R 181610Z FEB 76 ZFF-6

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 343

INFO AMCONGEN BELIZE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1334

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, GT, UK, BH, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: BELIZE: PRESIDENT LAUGERUD'S PLANS TO DISCUSS ISSUE  
WITH THE SECRETARY

REF: GUATEMALA 384, USDAO LONDON IR 6-836-00105-76 DTG  
091443Z FEB 76

1. DURING AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRESIDENT LAUGERUD FEBRUARY  
17, PRESIDENT SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO SPRING ANY SURPRISES  
ON THE SECRETARY. IN THEIR CONVERSATION DURING THE  
SECRETARY'S VISIT FEBRUARY 24, LAUGERUD INTENDED TO  
CONCENTRATE PRIMARILY ON THE EARTHQUAKE AND GUATEMALA'S  
RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION NEEDS. HOWEVER, HE WANTED TO GIVE  
US ADVANCE NOTICE THAT HE INTENDED TO TALK BRIEFLY ABOUT  
THE BELIZE DISPUTE.

2. ON OF THE POINTS HE PARTICULARLY WANTED TO MAKE TO THE  
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SECRETARY IS THAT THE BRITISH, IN LAUGERUD'S VIEW, ARE  
NOT HELPING THE CAUSE OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT VERY MUCH.  
GOG INTENDS TO GO FORWARD WITH NEGOTIATIONS AND IN FACT

WILL SHORTLY PROPOSE TO MHG THAT THE TALKS WHICH WERE PREVENTED BY THE EARTHQUAKE BE RESCHEDULED FOR EARLY APRIL. BECAUSE THE MEN WERE NEEDED FOR RELIEF WORK, GUATEMALA HAS PULLED "PRACTICALLY ALL" OF ITS TROOPS OUT OF THE PETEN DEPARTMENT THAT BORDERS ON BELIZE. IT WILL TAKE GUATEMALA YEARS TO RECOVER FROM THE EARTHQUAKE AND IT CERTAINLY POSES NO THREAT TO THE BRITISH FORCES IN BELIZE.

3. GIVEN THOSE FACTS, LAUGERUD SAID HE FOUND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE UK HAD FAILED TO MAKE ANY REDUCTION IN THE ADDITIONAL MILITARY FORCES IT SENT TO BELIZE LAST NOVEMBER, AS IT HAD PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED AND PRIVATELY ASSURED THE GOG IT WOULD (REFTELS). REPORTS HE RECEIVES FROM THE GUATEMALAN CONSULATE IN BELIZE INDICATE THAT ALTHOUGH SOME BRITISH FORCES HAVE BEEN ROTATED, TO TOTAL IS STILL THE SAME. EVEN THE TWO BRITISH FRIGATES ARE STILL OPERATING OFF THE COAST INSTEAD OF THE USUAL ONE. WITH GUATEMALA FLAT ON ITS BACK, LAUGERUD SAID, HE WONDERES WHY.

4. THERE ARE ALSO INSTANCES OF JUST PLAIN THOUGHTLESSNESS, LACK OF TACT, ON THE BRITISH PART THAT CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR HIM, LAUGERUD SAID. FOR EXAMPLE, A BRITISH MERCHANT SHIP DESTINED FOR BELIZE RECENTLY PUT INTO SANTO TOMAS, GUATEMALA'S CARIBBEAN PORT, WITH 20 MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS ABOARD. MERCHANT SHIPS CARRYING MILITARY EQUIPMENT, HE SAID, ARE REQUIRED TO GIVE ADVANCE NOTICE; THIS SHIP DID NOT. THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY WANTED TO SEIZE THE SHIP FOR VIOLATING THAT REQUIREMENT, BUT LAUGERUD REFUSED BECAUSE HE WAS DETERMINED NOT TO PERMIT ANY INCIDENTS THAT COULD MAR THE RESUMPTION OF TALKS. BUT THE BRITISH ACTION WAS EMBARRASSING.

5. COMMENT: IF THE PRESIDENT IS IN ERROR, AND SOME REDUCTION IN BRITISH FORCES HAS BEEN MADE, IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF HMG, OR, IF THEY ARE UNWILLING TO DO SO, WE WERE TO SO INFORM THE GOG.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PBOR, OVIP, GT, UK, BH, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)  
**To:** STATE INFO AMCONGEN BELIZE  
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